1f Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

of the Dahomean kingdom by the French. All other walls are of swish. Today in West Africa the automobile and sewing machine have found their way into remote corners. But more important still than these changes wrought by European civilizations, which have made inroads chiefly on the material life of the Africans, are those resulting from intertribal wars, which followed the introduction of guns and gunpowder into Africa and which helped to establish the great West African dynasties. The result of the conquest of one native people by another was constant cultural interstimulation which made for changes in the indigenous civilizations.

In the Guiana bush, however, where these runaway Negroes and their descendants have been living, the fortunes of African kingdoms, the cultural contacts that have affected the Africans, have not touched their own tribal destinies. Neither has the civilization of the white man nor that of the Indian introduced basic changes into their manner of living or thinking.

There are no roads in the Guiana bush, and what footpaths exist to connect one village with another are difficult to follow and, moreover, are not for the stranger, whether he be white or mulatto. For such as these the highway is the river, with native paddlers alert in their surveillance of a stranger's activities. The old men on the river have made a tradition of recalling the struggle of the ancestors for freedom and survival, and it is not without significance that one of the three worst crimes among the Bush Negroes—one that ranks with incest and murder—is informing on a Negro to a white man.

In contrast with this isolation of the Bush Negroes, the Negroes of Paramaribo have known close contact with the whites, with Carib and Arawak Indians, and in more recent years with the Hindu and Javanese laborers brought to the colony. Only suggestions of the manner in which the beliefs of town and bush correspond or differ can be included here, since this account concerns itself with the Saramacca people. Yet for the understanding of this study it must be

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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184 emphasized that whatever the differences, much of Africa remains in the coastal region. Thus, to cite an instance, at a *winti* dance in Paramaribo one night, the drummers were grumbling about the slowness with which possession was coming on. At last the priestess, possessed by *Lebba*, the Nigerian-Dahomean god of the crossroads, began to dance. Whereupon an elderly drummer flung up his hands and cried out, "Praise God, idolatry is not dead yet!" The word he used for idolatry was Dutch, and he pronounced it in Negro-English, *afkodrai*.

121 The importance of the Bush Negroes for the student of Negro cultures, then, is that they live and think today as did their ancestors who established themselves in this bush, which is to say that they live and think much as did the Negroes who were brought to other parts of the New World, and who became the ancestors of the New World Negroes of the present day.

In planning this book, therefore, it has seemed more important to stress the Bush Negro's attitudes toward his own civilization, and his own logic in explaining his customs, than to give a more conventional description of an integrated village or the tribal life of a primitive people. Such attitudes, moreover, whether analyzed among Negroes in Africa, Guiana, the Caribbean, or in the United States, can be studied most advantageously when they are juxtaposed against the factor of outsiders—in this case ourselves, a man and a woman, who came as friendly whites.

114 This book, however, is not an ethnographic treatise. The scientific discussion of these data will appear in monographic form, while the correspondences between bush and town Negroes, and between these and other Negro groups found in the New World, are included in a memoir on the folk lore of the town Negroes of Paramaribo which is now in press. The situations to which we have given emphasis are those which have a direct bearing upon the beliefs and practices of Negro peoples wherever they are found today, but they are presented as they would—and did—actually

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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Bayo laughed. "All this isn't easy, white man. A line about this curve shows this to be a man-child. These are things bush people alone know."

The decorated rim of this tray had interested many who had seen the piece the winter before, and we had had pointed out to us what we ourselves had remarked, that the design was not continuous all around, but that it was divided into four parts, the crosshatched portion alternating with that of checkered squares. Did those have meaning? we asked Bayo.

"Ai, these belong to the women and the children. The small lines are the hair of the children, and the squares here that of the women." The brass-headed nails he touched one by one on the photograph. "The women have nice kamemba," he said, at last.

On the upper river we had acquired another tray with similar motifs, but more elaborately decorated, with carvings on the outer surface as well as the inner, and also with many more brass-headed nails. This use of nails, which was more general in the deep interior, had at first seemed an anomaly, for they must come from the white man's city, since the Bush Negro, we knew, had lost the African technique of iron working. But as we saw more deeply into their customs, we recognized that these nails studding the carvings represented a survival of the African art tradition, and it was, therefore, reasonable that in the deep interior they should be found more profusely on the carvings.

Human representations outlined with the realism of African masks we almost never met, and the exceptional instances suggested only resemblances. The mask itself, as far as we could learn, was not used in their dances. The men knew what masks were, but whether this knowledge came as part of their African tradition, or whether it was brought from the city and the French shore, we could not determine. The African style of depicting the human form had, however, not been entirely lost by their slave ancestors. In this village of Ma'lobbi, where lived one of the finest carvers on the river, the carving over a doorway held us

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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Saramaccaner

is used as a living-room; cooking is sometimes carried on there, but more often in an open communal kitchen used by the entire village. Some towns have several such open sheds.

We enter the hut where the headman of the village lives, and find him lying in his hammock. It is perhaps a bit of conscious arrogance, to demonstrate his independence of the white man, that the captain does not rise to greet us. He rises, however, to greet Abaisa.

"Well, friend, how are you?" we begin. In talkee-talkee the question runs: *"So, matti, fie you tang?"*

He replies civilly, complaining a little, perhaps. We offer him a few leaves of tobacco, always acceptable. While we parley with the chief, the men of the village are carrying our equipment up from the corials to the village. This they always do, without being asked and without being paid. Even small children take part in the portage. Nothing is ever stolen.

Quite conscious of the heat inside the dark hut, we do not palaver long. Leaving the two chiefs lolling in hammocks we pass out of the breast-high doorway into the clearing, and go about examining the living-quarters and the people. This is a village of the Saramaccaner tribe, descended from the Saramacca rebels of two hundred years ago. All the huts and villages of this tribe are quite similar. Among the Aucaner tribe, descended from the Ouca rebels, are villages of a different type.

One does not doubt the good intentions of the Moravian Brothers and certain Catholics who have established missions at a few points on the rivers. But their evangelical efforts have

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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gave rise to another Bush Negro nation known as the *Boni* tribe. There are also three other tribes today of less importance: the *Matawaai* on the Upper Saramacca River, the *Quintee-Matawaai* which is a sub-tribe on the Copenam, and the *Paramacca* on the Middle Marowyne with villages on both the French and Dutch sides of the river.

The tribal divisions are strictly enforced. Not only is intermarriage forbidden, but each tribe has its separate government, and each is referred to locally as a "river nation." Each tribe likewise has its own territory, and any poaching by hunters, fishers, or balata bleeders is rigorously punished. The ruler of the tribe is a king, or *granman*. Among the photographs is one of old Jankoeso, the kindly shrewd ruler of the Saramaccaner nation; the Aucaner ruler, Amekti, has just died, his place probably being taken by Matodja. The Boni granman is named Awensai.

The largest tribe is the Saramaccaner, with a population of about 14,000. Their village of Santi Gron (Sandy Ground), some twenty miles from Paramaribo on the Lower Saramacca River is the nearest of all Djuka villages to white civilization. But the main body of this tribe begins some ninety miles up the Surinam River from Paramaribo, and the villages are strung along the Surinam River for a hundred or more miles further on back into the interior. The names of some of these villages are: Nu Condree, Lombe, Gansee, Biodoti, Adawai, De Jun, Masumba Pratti, and Dahomey, and other towns of even more picturesque appellations: Boto-Passi, Poki Gron, Granman Condree, and many more.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

after a day's portage from its source one may strike the Tosso Creek, which brings the lower Sara Creek Aucaners into the distant Tapanahoni River, where exist the main body of the Aucaner tribe. They inhabit both banks of the Tapanahoni, from its mouth where it flows into the Marowyne River to some distance beyond the far Jai Creek. The Aucaners, like the Saramaccaners, are divided into several lo or clans. The names of these are as follows: the *Missi Jon lo* and *Otto lo*, which are the most powerful and to which belong the families of the Granmans; the *Perica lo, Pata lo M'beh lo, Ju Nengre lo, Penasi lo, N'Yafi lo, Bray lo, Compai lo, Deekah lo, La Paix lo, Ke-o Condree lo*, and *Pooloogoodoo lo*. The head of the lo is called *Papa fu ah lo*, "father for the lo."

Beside these, the Aucaners have also divided their tribe into two separate parts, but they are both under the same Granman. These divisions are known as the *Uppo Nengre* (Upper Negro) and *Below Nengre* (Below Negro). The boundary between them being the Gran Hollo (Big Hole) Falls in the Tapanahoni River. The territory of the Below Nengre begins past the mouth of the Gran Creek and extends up the Tapanahoni River to the falls above mentioned. The islands in the Marowyne belong to this division and their territory also extends to the Dutch side of the Lawa River up to Aboona Sungu Falls (a man named Aboona sank there), which forms the boundary between the Aucaners and the Boni tribe in that region. Some names of the villages belonging to the Below Nengre Aucaners of that dis-

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner
Saramaccaner
Boni

619 In general appearance and culture the Aucaners vary little
●184 from the other large tribe, the Saramaccaners.

[531] The art motifs and their treatment as displayed on the Aucaner wood carvings as a rule differ from those of the Saramaccaners. On the other hand, some of the pieces were found to be practically identical.

The Aucaner talkee-talkee also differs from that of the Saramaccaners, the former being more like the speech of the
[197 Town Negroes. The Aucaners have no deepee-talkee or odo
198 as have the Saramaccaners, but they have a dialect known as
191] *Koropina* where a *p* or an *m* is spoken before the vowels in a word for the purpose of confusing strangers. A similar custom is prevalent among the Negroes of Curaçao, Dutch West Indies.

[291] The dress of the Aucaners is the same as that of the Saramaccaners, excepting that they affect more often the breast-cloth, the *wassapangye,* and the head-cloth, the *mussu.*

Among the Aucaners the toga garment is called the *yembah,* while it is called a camissa by the Saramaccaners. The barrier of palm leaves is called *chifunga* by the Aucaners and *azang pau* by the Saramaccaners.

[262 The system of food taboos and general culture are the
606 same. There is no mother-in-law taboo among either the
184] Aucaners or the Saramaccaner tribe.

[161] The Boni tribe, which consists of about 900 people, is de-
648 scended from escaped slaves who crossed the Marowyne River into French Guiana and who were allowed to remain there unmolested by the French authorities. This is the only

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Bonis

Although the huts are of Africanesque architecture, similar 342
to those of the Aucaner tribe, there is, at times, more wooden board in the construction and less thatch.

During the expedition of 1928 we were informed that the 316
Bonis, particularly at the village of Apatoo, were conversant 326
with the old West African method of smelting iron and manufacturing it into implements of various kinds. This claim proved to be entirely groundless. If there is any iron ore in the neighbourhood, these tribesmen do not know where it is, and most certainly do not understand how to smelt it.

It was in Africa that the art of iron working is supposed to have originated, and the iron work of West Africa, whence the Djukas came, is a thing of beauty. But the Djukas have lost this hereditary art. Among the Bonis, the work in metal seems to be limited to the soldering of copper French coins to bracelets made of iron or copper pipe, which they procure by trade or from the machinery of long abandoned French gold exploitations. They also make brass bracelets and anklets of considerable width out of brass piping obtained from a similar source. The piping is split with the sharp blade of an axe and hammered into shape with the blunt end. We were able to obtain a stiletto with an iron blade and a handle of brass riveted to it with copper, but we are under the impression that the blade, at least, is of French or Italian manufacture.

In their general habits as regards hunting, fishing, agri- 184 ●
culture, canoe building, social customs and structure, dress, 619
and so on, the Bonis are quite similar to the Aucaners. They speak a dialect of talkee-talkee which has distinct differences [191
from the Aucaner and the Saramaccaner in that it contains a 197]
good deal of French words.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

184 619 good deal of French patois. Most of the people also speak a fluent and, at times, a good French, which they have learned from the freed convicts, the libérés, of the largest French prison colonies in Guiana at St. Laurent, situated about forty miles from the mouth of the Marowyne River. Some of the 439 Negroes of this tribe, as well as some of the Aucaners, sometimes visit St. Laurent for purposes of barter and trade. They also occasionally aid the French in transporting loads in their canoes up to the remaining placer mine.

648 These Bush Negroes have seen thousands of white convicts and libérés. They have seen white men under the most degrading conditions possible to human existence on this planet. They have seen them shot down in the street. They have seen them rummaging in cans of tropical garbage that even a dog would shun, or escaping through the jungles, simply starving, hunted animals. Their point of view in regard to this may be summarized in the answer received when the question was put to one Boni as to what he thought of the Penal Colony; he said: *"Francie mong sung go dede"*—"Frenchmen soon die."

But just across the river from St. Laurent is the little settlement of Albina and the *Doocie mong* (Dutchmen). The Dutch have armed soldiers there so that the escaping libérés cannot cross.

322 As among the other tribes, the Boni are adept in the carving of wood. They make the usual kinds of highly decorated implements, such as large combs, pot stirrers, food trays carved out of sections of a tree trunk. The door posts and façades of their huts are often elaborately carved

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Paramaca

The small Paramacca tribe does much less in the way of
322 wood carving than do the others of the Djukas. This was evidenced by the few pieces we were able to collect and was also known to be a fact by the Aucaner Bush Negroes who accompanied us to the Paramacca district. The motifs dis-
● [184] played upon the articles collected were practically identical with those found on Aucaner pieces.

123 In fairness to the Paramaccas, however, it must be mentioned from our experience among other tribes that collecting is much facilitated when one is cordially known. On a second or third expedition one is able to collect many times more specimens than upon a first introduction. The Bush Negroes are at first shy as a rule and not anxious to part with their belongings.

184 The tribes do not fraternize much with each other. Some
619 travellers report that the Aucaner and Boni tribes feel them-
609 selves superior to the others because they have less contact with the white man. If this is true, we cannot report any personal observation of it. A traveller has no more difficulty among them than among the Saramaccaner people. Some
628 ill-feeling between the Aucaners and Saramaccaners dates
609 back to the slave revolt, when the former observed their peace treaty so scrupulously as even to aid the slave-owners in re-

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

likewise roughly done. The reason for this seems to derive from the general nature of primitive religion as it occurs among the Bush Negroes. Two explanations of this were given by native informants. If the god is a good god, and well disposed toward the black man, he doesn't care whether his fetishes are well executed or not. If he is a bad god he is going to continue to be bad, regardless of whether much time is spent on his fetishes or not. Another Bush Negro, questioned about this, said: "Me no sabby de Gadu luku"—"I don't know what God looks like." The primitive æsthetic feeling, apparently, is bound up with practical ends. There is absolutely no care or pains taken with religious objects, whereas erotic objects are finished with great skill.

There seems to be considerable variation between the tribes of Djukas in the character of their art work. The Aucaner wood carvings have, in general, a more refined and delicate cast than the wood carvings of their neighbours, the Saramaccaners and Boni. The differences in treatment of the motifs among the Bush Negro tribes and the general dissimilarities and likenesses of the carvings are best understood by consulting the accompanying illustrations.

The combs vary from two and a half inches to twenty-four inches in length, and even these more immense combs see actual service. They are always made of a single piece, including the tines. For the most part they are made of harder woods, with occasional inlays. A number of them are trick pieces, with little ingenious devices that catch and hold the imagination of the primitive. For comparison, a West

/34 cont./

577 all, toward one another as fellow tribesmen they are very honest and trust one another's word. Frequently it happens that among them one family leaves the camp to go on a journey or else is absent for some other reason, and that it must leave behind unfenced the cultivated land planted with rice, tubers, bananas, bakoven, and sugar cane. But never will another of them steal any of that. And similarly their dwellings are open, since the entrance is not closed off by any door; upon their departure they leave one thing and another in it, but they will never miss any-
626 thing upon their return. Certainly contributing to this is the circumstance that in the vicinity of everybody's property there is a sign or idolatrous image, which they call obia, to which great power is ascribed, and for those who might want to commit dishonest acts, the legend can be observed, as for the European:
784 "Beware of mantraps." The fear that they have of these obias is not unjustified, for if it should happen at any time that misuse of trust took place, then the culprit, however long it takes, upon discovery will not escape the revenge of the deceived, revenge which frequently consists in the administering of secret remedies whereby terrible diseases and sufferings, if not death, come about.

152 They are very concerned about the faithfulness of their
837 wife or wives, /35/ for the Bush Negro is very jealous, whereas the wives cannot be exonerated of being susceptible to seduction. Accordingly it happens among them more than once that marital fidelity is violated.

184 Of the various tribes, the Aucaners are the most
[177] civilized, but over against that also the craftiest, which can be
[157] attributed to their more frequent intercourse with Europeans.
[161] Among their tribes they are the most powerful, and their numerical strength is estimated at 4,000 to 5,000 souls.

123 According to the declaration of the Bush Negroes, no White has previously enjoyed the trust and attachment that I experienced from them. However, secretively they always conduct themselves toward the Whites, with respect to me they make an exception. If there is something secret among them that I should like to know, they will, upon my request, immediately and without any diffidence communicate it to me.

/144 cont./

241 [177] time that the runaway slaves took these with them from the plantations then in existence.

It is therefore worthwhile in various respects to explore what is 241 being cultivated. The following summary has been put together 114 from the data of my own observations and from information pro- [128] vided by various Bush Negroes. This list is not complete; what is lacking, however, is probably of minor importance.

A. Cultivated Crops That Are Grown on the Food Grounds

244 Bitter cassava (kasàba).

[262] This is the most important crop, from which the cassava bread and kwak are made. One plants the shoots in December, but also in March and April. After 12 months the harvest begins; in case of a food shortage they are dug after only seven months. Yellow and white varieties are distinguished according to the color of the contents of the tubers. To the yellow varieties belong: witti tiki, which is kept on the grounds up to two years, blaka tiki, which stands on the grounds only one year, and taja tiki, which provides produce for a long time and is especially good for the making of kwak. To the white varieties belong: amosiang, sanang kasaba, [252] and domberi. Cassava bread is made from this. In the making of kwak all the colors are mixed together in order to obtain the desired yellow color. Each variety separately provides a less tasty product.

252 On the Marowijne one makes more kwak (kwaka) than cassava ● [184] bread, while on the Surinam River and the Saramacca only cassava bread /a map and Figs. 1-14 appear here/ /145/ is baked with the flour. Kwak is prepared in the following manner: The tubers, after they are peeled, are put in water in a korjaal (1) for two

1. korjaal = boat.

days and then grated. This grated cassava is then allowed to sour in a box or a korjaal; after that the grated cassava is expressed

[text continues on p. 21]

/148 cont./

244 Yam roots frequently become very large. One cuts them
252 up and boils the pieces like tajer tubers.

Maize (kaloe).

243 Maize is sowed together with other crops and provides one of the first products; the harvesting is done after three months
[184] (March). Only one variety is known. Sometimes special maize plots are laid out (Paramaccaners).

252 The young maize is eaten boiled or roasted, sometimes also pounded and boiled to a porridge (kaloepapa). A well-known delicacy is "ansowé" or "asogrie," made of roasted dry kernels finely pounded and mixed with sugar.

244 Watermelon (watramoen)

This is planted in patches everywhere on the grounds; the harvest time falls in March. There are two varieties in use:
[262] hesiskin and blakaskin, both of which provide small, oval-round, white-spotted fruit with a bland-sweet, light-pink fruit-flesh; the fruit is eaten fresh.

Pumpkin (pampoen).

One finds this plant in many places, but never in great numbers.

Only the oblong dark green variety is known; the harvest
[252] time is from April on, and a long time afterwards. The fruit is cut in pieces, boiled, and eaten.

Okra (okrɔ).

This crop is generally grown on the food grounds; it provides edible fruit after three months, in February and March. Three varieties are distinguished:
sebiwiki, with short fruit;
afoesibobi, with short fruit;
diatoetoe, with long fruit.

252 The young green fruit is cut into pieces and boiled to a soup, usually together with tajer, meat, and so forth.

/5 cont./

133 This extreme fragmentation of the relief must be remembered
182 as one of the ecological factors influencing the human peopling most directly; it renders the transport of heavy loads impracticable, the establishing of roads practically impossible. Men are led to
[361] settle along the rivers, which constitute the only routes of penetration toward the interior of the country.

133 All the important rivers flow into an alluvial valley whose
132 width varies from some tens of meters to a kilometer, dry during the greater part /6/ of the year, but flooded under several meters
134 of water during the great rains of May-June. This annual inunda-
241 tion makes the alluvial lands unfit for agriculture; the inhabitants of Guiana cultivate only sloping lands and even very steep slopes readily; for good drainage of the soil is indispensable for the raising of manioc whose tubers, which remain in the ground for more than a year, are threatened with rotting.

311 The cultivable zone is in fact closely limited around each village. Practically, it is limited to a strip of 1,500 to 2,000 meters along the banks of each watercourse accessible to pirogues.
[482] Transport of manioc tubers, carried on by the women several
[462] times a month, becomes impracticable if the distance to be covered with loads is greater than two kilometers at the maximum (1).

[101]
[131]
• [184]

1. The Djuka, very numerous on the Tapanahoni, cultivate as far as three or four kilometers from the river; but in general, the Refugee Blacks prefer to build farming habitations at a distance of several days' by boat from their village when this gives them the possibility of farming in the neighborhood of the banks.

/22 cont./

613 Situation of the lineages in 1958.

[643] The Dikan lineage, whose head is the grand man of the Boni, has practically died out, since it is comprised of only Grand Man Difu; upon his death it will totally disappear (1).

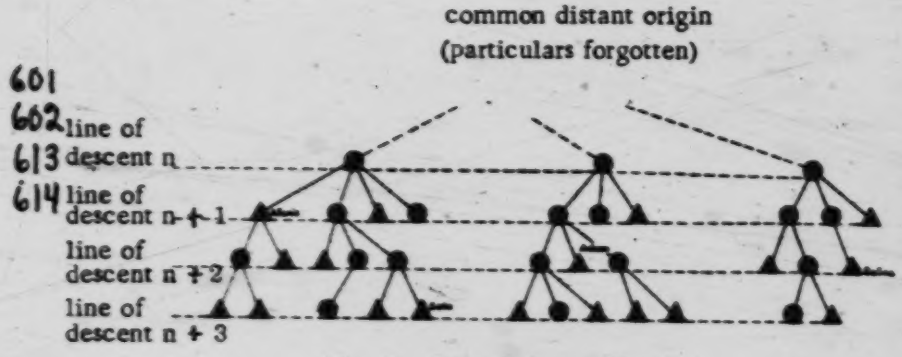

Fig. 3. Extended matrilineage.

613
184
174

1. Note that a Dikan lo exists among the Djuka; the separation of the Dikan-Djuka and the Dikan-Boni is necessarily anterior to the battles of 1793, which shows the ancientness of these groups.

621 For two generations the various lineages have delegated some
613 of their members /23/ to the grand man to conserve a certain im-
571 portance for his village. Thus Agodé (Boniville) now includes fragments of the Kotika, Dipélu, Lapé, Dju, and Papaïston lineages, forming that many individualized small quarters in the village.

/24 cont./

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614

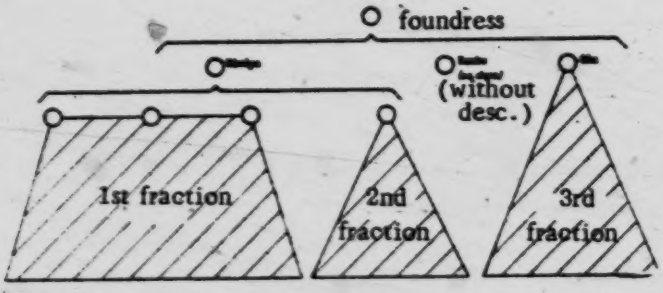

Fig. 4. Common genealogy of the three fractions of the Kotika lineage.

[621] divided between the small villages of Lapé Tabiki and Loka. It is a well-grouped lineage whose members know their genealogy perfectly as far as a common ancestress named Mata, who must have lived at the end of the 18th century; only one small group which we shall call Lapé 2 (descendants of Atili) does not know exactly the ties attaching them to the principal group. The law of exogamy is respected rigorously within this group; there is not a single case of marriage between the two fractions. The members of the two fractions consider themselves a single lineage.

[784] They have the same kunu.

[184] Note that there is a Lapé lo among the Djuka, regarded as of the same origin.

[621] No element of heterogeneous origin has settled in the villages of the Lapé lo.

613
[361] The Dju lineage, which occupies the central part of the Asisi Island, also fits the definition of kin groups among the Refugee Blacks. Its members know /25/ their entire genealogy as far back as a common ancestress named Aluku, doubtless, tracing to the middle of the 18th century.

/25 cont./

613 Among the Dju there is no fraction separated from the principal group.

[184] There is also a Dju lo among the Djuka. The word Dju alludes to the Jews, the lineage probably having been born in the plantations belonging to the Jews of Surinam.

The law of exogamy is rigorously applied within the Dju lo.

No element of heterogeneous origin is established among the Dju.

613 614 621 The Dipélu lineage was the most important in the past; from the point of view of genealogy it is split up into three groups whose members are scattered in three villages, subject to different authorities.

Genealogy		Villages
Dipélu I		l'Enfant Perdu Apatu (founded in 1882)
Dipélu II, 1st fraction Dipélu II, 2nd fraction	very recent scission	Kormotibo some elements in Asisi.

613 —Dipélu I forms a unit remarkable for the amplitude of its genealogy, completely known, which extends over eight generations and goes back to a common ancestress named Sanyan, who must have lived in the middle of the 18th century. The common [174] origin of the two groups being necessarily anterior to this ancestress, it seems logical to make it go back to the beginning of the 18th [601] century. In spite of the remoteness in time of their common origin, the members of both groups know with precision their "horizontal" kinship ties (brother, uncle, etc.), which have lost

/29 cont./

121 This is what necessitates as precise an inventory as possible of the population in its present state.

61 Matrilineal kin groups among the Djuka and Saramaka Refugee Blacks.
114 Authors who have described the social structure of the Djuka and
184 Saramaka, groupings appreciably more numerous than the Boni, have also called attention to the use of the words lo and bɛɛ, but give them a completely different meaning.

194 The organization they describe can be summarized thus:
571 Before making up tribes, the rebels lived in small groups
621 near the plantations from which they had escaped; these groups of composite origin were designated by the word lo which means: troop, band; the same word is used to designate a band of animals.

[162] These rebels used to belong to all the nations of the west
[103] coast of Africa. In spots there may have been an attempt at regroupings of elements belonging to the same nation, as proven by the village names Loango, Dahomey, among the Saramaka.

[622] But the majority of these small groups were very probably of heterogeneous origin; in each of these lo, the bravest and most capable was designated as head.

[648] After the recognition of the Djuka and Saramaka by the
[167] government of Surinam and their regrouping on the great rivers of the interior, these groups kept their unity since they had a de facto organization and leaders. They were naturally designated by the name of the plantation they had come from. We say for example Dju nɛ̃nge for the former slaves of the Jews, Kɔ̃pani nɛ̃nge for the former slaves of the Compagnie des Indes Orientales /East India Company/. /30/

174 In the course of the 19th century the total number of Refugee
613 Blacks increased very rapidly under the influence of a high birth
614 rate. The lineages in the proper meaning of the term bɛɛ, meaning the descendants of the same ancestress, took on sufficient im-
621 portance to constitute distinct social units. They grouped in
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/30 cont./

174 separate villages and the more important even burst out into
613 several villages whose heads were recognized as "captains" by the
grand man and then by the government. The number of Djuka
614 captains recognized by the government of Surinam has not stopped
621 growing; it was 28 these last few years.

571 The lo no longer represented an effective social unit, but its members kept common worships. For example, it is said that
[188] the Dju nẽnge go each year as a ritual to get earth from the Savanc des Juifs /Savanna of the Jews/ where their ancestors were slaves.

[114] This explanation seems probable. The kin-group is not the only social unit known to Africans; the bond between man and land has equal importance in their eyes; the fact that their fathers had lived together, that they had been buried in the same cemetery created a among the rebel slaves a de facto bond which was able to suffice, at the beginning of the rebellion, to found villages and a social organization.

[114] However, this theory cannot be entertained without reservations. It has not been possible to verify it by systematic studies, the Djuka and Saramaka having firmly opposed until now any ethnographic investigation involving the statement of genealogies and the inventory of the population of the villages.

[184] It contradicts what we have pointed out among the Boni. In that group six great lineages are counted, of which four (Dju, Kotika, La Paix, Dikan) have a name also alluding to the plantations from which their ancestors fled.

Nevertheless it is certainly a question of lineages in the proper meaning of the term, and nobody remembers that any other organization ever existed. Also, in the absence of systematic studies of the Djuka and Saramaka, the problem of the origin of
[184] their kin groups remains obscure. The future will permit verifying one or the other of the two hypotheses:

/30 cont./

1st. Lo = de facto grouping of rebels of any provenance, which has in the long run split up into lineages but which remains in the form of a common worship;

2nd. Lo = lineage, from the very beginning.

Conceptions Relative to Kinship and Marriage

[121] Ties between the individual and the ancestors. Before examining more deeply the social and family structure of the Refugee Blacks, [184] it is indispensable to study what religious ties are implied between the individual and the ancestors. Here one is in the presence of basic beliefs which seem identical in the various tribes of Refugee Blacks of Guiana and of which their structure is the consequence.

[711] In the civilizations of Blacks Africa it is supposed that a current of life and /31/ strength circulates from the divinity to men through the medium of the ancestors. Among the Refugee Blacks it is taken for granted that in this respect each man is bound [782] to his ancestors through the maternal line only. If he falls prey to illness, injustice, or adversity, he can call only on them in his prayer.

That does not mean that the tie with the father is ignored [827] or considered as having little importance; it is taken for granted, as we shall see, that in the creation of man certain psychic elements are transmitted from father to son. But the current of strength binding the individual to the ancestors does not pass through the father. One cannot pray usefully to the soul of one's dead father. [755] If I am sick and divination incriminates the action of my dead [782] father's soul, I cannot address either prayer or offering directly to him; for that I shall have recourse to one of his near relatives in the maternal line.

6:Hurault--77a K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

/facing p. 56/

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531

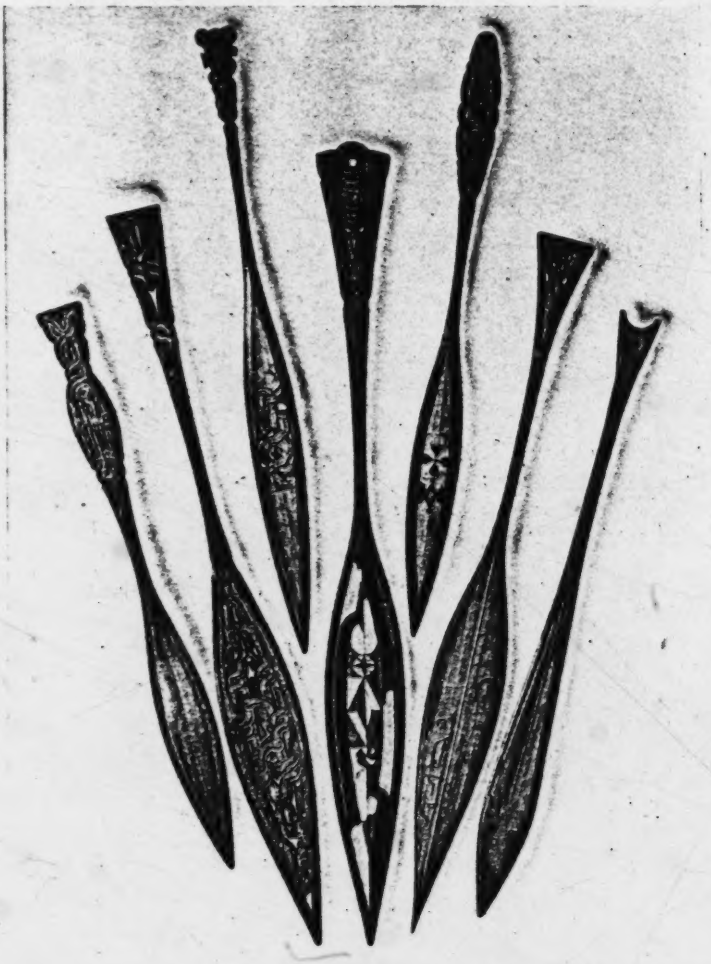

Fig. 13. Boni paddles.
At the right, for comparison, a Saramaka paddle.

643 692 [578] [423] /71 cont./

--Disputes over the appropriation of lands are very rare in Boni country because of the sparseness of population.

We have never seen the grand man hold anything other than audiences of conciliation relative to people who had fought or [183] threatened each other. The custom of the Refugee Blacks would indeed be difficult to fit into a code. The state of persons and social duties derive so directly from beliefs that the intervention of a judge is not indispensable for the functioning of the society.

643 423 The grand man is supposed to retain power over all the lands of Boni country which are not allocated to lineages; in particular, this is the case with the upper basin of the headstreams of the Lawa. [648] [184] It is above all by virtue of this that he is considered the suzerain of the Indians living in this territory. The same conception exists among the Djuka with respect to the headstreams of the Tapanahoni.

643 724 [226] The suzerainty of the grand man over the land and waters is marked, as in Africa, by special rights in the domain of hunting and fishing. He alone can authorize group fishing on the great river by the process of la nivrée. The same problem does not hold for hunting which is practiced in a strictly individual fashion. But it is taken for granted that if a tapir (1) is killed in Boni country,

1. The tapir is the largest animal of the bush.

the hunter must carry its head as well as a thigh to the grand man.

643 648 A certain misunderstanding reigns between the Europeans and the Boni on the subject of the duties of the grand man. The Europeans tend to believe that he commands the tribe in the way in which a colonel commands a regiment, that he can designate a certain man for a certain job, fix the price of boats, etc. The grand man tries to give satisfaction to the administration /72/ to justify the pay he draws, but he succeeds very badly in it, for in reality he possesses almost no temporal power.

/82/

Territorial Implantation of Lineages

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613
311 As we have shown, the Refugee Blacks are caught between contradictory imperatives:

--Their legal thought, centered on joint possession by the lineage, pushes them to distribute land among the lineages in compact blocs;

[182]
[241] --The geographic environment, and most especially the ravages of the manioc ant, obliges them to give to each individual the possibility of abruptly changing his territorial sector or to hasten the planned rhythm of his fallow fields.

The solution which has imposed itself has been to divide the lands of each lineage into a certain number of zones scattered on the two banks of the river. Instead of finding large blocks with a single holder, we are going to find sectors sometimes rather small. With that exception, the legal principles of the Refugee Blacks keep all their practical value.

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[489] Each village possesses a certain number of landing places or dégrads /wharfs/, from which fan out a certain number of paths. The wharf is the center of a territorial zone within which the members of the lineage fan out, pushing their clearings farther and farther, until they meet the clearings created by other lineages. At this moment a boundary is in effect created, at least in some points (1).

• [184]

1. Among the Djuka it happens that a wharf may be common to two lineages and that the boundary may be marked by a big road perpendicular to the river and starting from the wharf; this system corresponds to a concern for establishing more precise boundaries between groups occupying land to the maximum. It is not observed anywhere in Boni country.

/99/

182 161 241 423 613 That this system is perfectly workable has been sufficiently demonstrated by the regular expansion for two centuries of the tribes of Refugee Blacks and by the good functioning of their institutions.

182 Thus the basic instability of the Indians of Guiana cannot be attributed to the influence of the geographical environment alone. It comes essentially from social and psychological factors.

/100/ STUDY OF FARMING HABITATIONS

128 We are now going to study the functioning of the farming habitations under the same aspects:

--Structure (composition of each one, kinship ties);

--Territorial implantation: nature and extent of rights over the land;

--Functioning.

241 62 184 Not all Boni have a farming habitation; about two-thirds of them are satisfied with the lands they occupy near the residence villages.

241 621 361 162 613 The farming habitations we are going to study more especially and which are situated between the mouth of the Inini and Simayé Falls to the south, group about a hundred persons belonging to the Dju, Lapé, Awara Bakka, and Papaïton lineages. Another group of farming habitations situated a little south of Kormotibo, which we shall study briefly and only so far as their composition is concerned, bring together about 60 persons. Finally, other very dispersed farming habitations exist, belonging principally to the Kotika lineage, some in the Maripasoula region, others in the Abattis-Kotika Falls /region/.

241 184 62 [361] [162] On the whole, the Boni farming habitations cannot be compared either as to importance or stability with the Djuka farming villages which are placed at intervals on the middle course of the Maroni, grouping 3,000 to 3,500 persons: this is easy to understand: the Djuka, continually short of land, are obliged,

/100 cont./

241 62 [184] under pain of losing their rights, to occupy the soil to the maximum. Besides, settled very far from their residence villages, they are led to creating more lasting establishments.

Among the Boni, farming habitations do not amount to much, built carelessly (to designate them one says kãpu (camp), and the groups who work there are not very stable.

423 241 [182] [184] However, the principles of establishment and functioning of farming habitations are exactly the same for the two tribes and result on the whole from the customary laws which, among the Refugee Blacks, govern the possession of land:

[425] [613] 1) When a man cuts a clearing in a zone which has never had any human establishment, he creates at the same time as a right of use for himself an imprescriptible real right for his lineage (bɛɛ) or more precisely for the fraction of the lineage living in the same village and subject to the same authority;

[428] [613] 2) This right is joint; at the death of an individual, anyone of that fraction of his lineage may occupy the lands he used to cultivate habitually. If there is a dispute, it must be settled within the framework of the lineage; /101/ /Fig. 17 appears here/ /102/

3) The extent of the zone over which this right is exercised is limited only by the zones over which other rights are exercised.

We have seen what mode of occupation of the soil resulted from these laws in the neighborhood of the "great villages." Here the distribution of lands among the farming habitations follows practically the same laws, whose effects are less rigorous, considering the very low density of occupation of the soil.

425 [361] 1) It is taken for granted that an isolated establishment in a quasi-deserted zone does not create lasting rights. If it happens to disappear, anybody may come to settle there after ascertaining from the first occupant that he no longer needs the place (such is the case with the very scattered establishments south of Simayé Falls up to Indian country; they do not create real territorial rights for the benefit of any lineage whatever.

/140/

684 688 784 This prohibition is of a purely religious nature and does not entail any social sanctions; those concerned are convinced that in such a case a suprahuman sanction would strike them in the form of sickness or accident.

582 [613] Prohibitions limiting marriage. Outside of the great interdiction, pikadu, which is attached to unions within one matrilineage and one patrilineage, two prohibitions limiting marriage are found among the Refugee Blacks, which they express thus:

[595] [587] --I cannot have two wives at the same time in the same lineage. For example I am forbidden to marry two "sisters" at the same time, but if I break with my wife, I may marry her classificatory "sister" or any other woman of the same lineage;

[835] [587] --I may not have relations, even passing ones, with a woman who has been married to my brother by the same mother; in particular, if my brother has just died, I shall not be able to marry his widow.

The Boni are not capable of explaining the deep reasons for these interdictions, but they interpret them as purely social [684] and not religious prohibitions. The offender is simply threatened with being beaten.

[171] The first of these rules seems very widely accepted in Black Africa, as much in patrilineal societies as in a matrilineal system.

[171] The second of these rules is characteristic in the Akan (Agni, Baoulé) culture area and shows that the family custom of the Refugee Blacks is related much more directly to that of the Agni-Ashanti group than to that of the Dahomey.

184 587 114 One can note that this rule is exactly contrary to the Saramaka custom, which obliges the widow to marry one of the brothers of the dead man; this custom has been interpreted by several authors as coming from imitation of the levirate of the Jews, with which certain rebels were acquainted (it is known that among the slaveowners there were many Jews).

/140 cont./

184 587 Whatever its origin, we should note that the Saramaka custom has no relation, as far as its legal content is concerned, to the levirate, nor to the inheritance of widows as it is practiced in numerous African societies. It does not correspond in any way to the transmission of a right over the widow, since this right does not exist; it probably results from the idea that the widow is better protected from the effects of the dead man's jealousy if she marries one of his brothers. Besides, she may [613] choose from among all his classificatory brothers, in the matrilineage as in the patrilineage, which assures her of a wide [586] choice. She can break this union without any compensation after some months of living together and resume complete liberty.

582 Statistics of marriages between kin groups. We have listed on the table opposite, the total unions for which we have been able to identify with certainty the kinship of the spouses, including those broken by divorce and death. Their total number is 411.

582 619 The table emphasizes the more or less great frequency of unions between /141/ /table appears here/ /142/ such-and-such kin groups, as well as the frequency of unions between Boni women and men of other tribes, DJUKA PARAMAKA, and SARAMAKA.

Out of a total of 411 unions of Boni women one notes:

--327 with BONI (80%);
-- 50 with DJUKA (12%);
-- 21 with SARAMAKA (5%);
-- 5 with PARAMAKA (1%);
[648] -- 8 with Creoles from Surinam (2%).

The proportion of intertribal marriages (20%) is high; it results from the frequent presence on the Maroni of Djuka or Saramaka boatmen coming to carry on transport. The reciprocal is not true; marriages between Boni men and women

[Text Continues on P. 209]

/144 cont./

584 602 To ask for his second wife Bugi (Aw.B.1, F41, Asisi-Awara Bakka vge.) he had sent Dosu (Dip. I, E4, Boniville), his father Malobi's classificatory brother (although a very distant relative) and his younger sister by the same mother, Kulina, who made the marriage proposal to Bugi's mother and to her classificatory uncles Antonu and Mato.

582 178 [701] Age of marriage. In former times there was a very precise custom about this. Men were not authorized to marry before about 30 years of age, constituting until that age the immediately mobilizable armed force. Women were authorized by their mothers to marry only when they had reached complete physical development, or between 20 and 22 years. This was the safeguard of a society deprived of all medical help against obstetrical risk, particularly serious for very young women. When the fiancé had temporarily emigrated to earn his living, the marriage could be put off until the age of 25 years and more. [184] This late marriage of girls was still met with only a few years ago among the Djuka, more faithful to custom. There was on the average five to ten years of age difference between husband and wife. /145/

For about the past ten years, under the influence of the relaxation of family discipline, the marriage age has gone down considerably, as much for the man as for the woman. Nearly all the girls married during the last two years were from 15 to 17 years old. It can be stated that the average marriage age of girls is 16 years (1).

1. We are speaking here of the age at the time of the consummation of marriage.

/161 cont./

764 692 This tribunal is charged with establishing the causes of death and rendering a decision on this subject which has the force of law. But it is above all charged with judging the dead person, with determining whether he has lived worthily, whether he has the right to be buried according to the rites and to be invoked as an ancestor, or whether on the contrary he was a wisimã.

[613] [645] The grand man designates one or two lineage heads to preside over the council and "command" the dead person until the burial.

The grand man designates who will lead the assemblage and will "command" the dead person until the burial.

764 692 613 This cannot be the head of the dead person's lineage, for no one can at the same time be judge and judged.

Ex.: for Béniti (Dju) this was Popo — head of the Lapé lo

for Atikati (Dju) it was Kondoku — head of the Awara Bakka lo

for Kotoïda (Aw.B.) it was Tafanié — head of the Papaïston lo

for Way (Dip. II) it was Tafanié --- /162/

764 787 The 2nd and 3rd days after the death are given over to the interrogation of the dead person, which on the evening of the first day had scarcely begun.

[184] The rites of this interrogation vary from one village to another; in certain villages they begin to carry the dead man even before the construction of the coffin; the questions are not asked everywhere in the same fashion.

[171] The dead person is interrogated by methods widespread in West Africa and which are related to spiritualism: the coffin is carried on the heads of two men, feet forward. The dead man is supposed to push the bearers forward to say yes, and to make them nod their heads from left to right to say no.

/174 cont./

764 Cemeteries. There are two cemeteries in Boni country: one on the lands of the Dikan lineage for the people living on the French bank, the other downstream from Kotika for the inhabitants of that village. They are ordinary places which nothing indicates from the bank, for they are covered like the rest of the country by secondary forest. The dead are buried there in graves aligned parallel to the river, about seven meters apart. The dead are placed with heads turned toward the river. No separation by lineage exists within the cemetery.

The graves are not marked by any decoration, and at the end of about ten years, the mound having settled down, no trace of the burial remains.

[767] The graves are never cleaned. Only the ɔlɔmã heads, who have received special instruction, know the graves of the principal chiefs and the boundaries of the cemetery.

769 [754] [765] The Boni never go to the cemetery alone and do not make offerings on the graves of their near relatives. Someone who would frequent the cemetery alone would be suspected of being a wisimã seeking to capture the yɔrka of a dead person.

764 487 Even if they are right near the villages, cemeteries are never connected directly to them by paths, and the dead are transported by boat. By proceeding thus they hope to isolate the villages from evil influences.

766 If someone dies by drowning, he is buried away from the cemetery. According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, among the Djuka [761] all drowned persons are supposed to have been victims of a [784] kunu; the Boni do not have this conception and declare that they [184] have lost the meaning of this custom; one notices, however, that they observe mourning for the drowned according to the usual rites.

/179 cont./

765 431 [606] Before coming out of mourning, the widow must procure for herself at the minimum the money necessary for a demijohn of tafia as a contribution to the festival of the lifting of mourning. She must make a present of several cans of couac to her husband's mother.

765 843 184 A pregnant woman undergoes mourning exactly according to the general law. The custom described by several authors for the Saramaka, according to which the pregnant woman must join one of her husband's "brothers," does not apply to the Boni.

765 888 [768] [602] There are some attenuations of the harshness of mourning with respect to old women. For example in 1956, Lémiki (70 years), living in Boniville, was in mourning for her husband Tabiki (Awara Bakka, but residing since childhood with the Lapé lineage in Loka /180/ where he had been raised by his father). Lémiki alternately spent three weeks in her house and three in her husband's. It was Asamani, Tabiki's sister by the same father, who exercised authority over her.

765 768 [613] This remarkable example shows that as regards mourning (rights and duties), the principle of residence plays an essential role. He who has been reared by his father is in this respect taken out of his lineage, which loses all rights and all control over the conduct of the mourning.

765 [775] The co-wives of a widower are subject to mourning on the same grounds as he, and for the same motive, since they are targets for the jealousy of the dead woman's yɔrka.

[768] However, they are authorized most often to live with their maternal family. When the period of dipi baaka has ended,

765 833 [613] they may take up conjugal relations again with their husband, but at intervals of several weeks and without his being able to spend the night with one of them. Each time he must ask permission of the head of the dead woman's lineage.

/191 cont./

What constitutes the religion of the Refugee Blacks is a synthesis of elements originating with various peoples of West Africa, especially the Ashanti, Agni, Mina, and Fon and also Congolese elements. This synthesis seems to have been born among the Saramaka, the first tribe formed at the beginning of the 18th century, and to have been adopted thereafter with modifications of detail by the Djuka, tribe created about 1760. The Boni, the last tribe formed, probably received these beliefs during the time of slavery which they spent under the tutelage of the Djuka, from 1815 to 1860. The beliefs of the Boni and those of the Djuka have an identical base; the rites and their effects on social life are exactly the same. Nevertheless, the Djuka, almost ten times more numerous, have been able to keep very differentiated conceptions and specialized cults, involving priests in the literal sense of the term.

The Boni have kept only the essentials, and many conceptions, especially the myths which serve as support for the whole tradition, are very much blurred among them.

The Boni like to imagine that Africans constitute only one nation, and that they have inherited in a lump the traditions and social forms of this nation. They know now (especially from having seen a good deal of the Senegalese riflemen of the 1937 French mission) that numerous tribes exist, but that has not shaken the veneration they have for Africa, source, for them, of all knowledge and all strength. However, almost nothing of the culture peculiar to each one of the great tribes has reached them; no name of an African nation has remained in their memory, and /192/ none of the languages of their land of origin has been kept (1); everywhere the vehicular language

1. One observes, however, that a certain number of disconnected details of African life have come down to them by oral tradition;

/192 cont./

791 171 [177] This is precisely what constitutes the great interest of the Refugee Blacks' religious forms, which one finds again, besides, in large measure, mixed with Christian ideas, among all the Blacks of South America. They seem to point out a very important common background of conceptions common to the West-African civilizations.

791 174 ● 184 It is certainly not by chance if the various tribes of Refugee Blacks have adopted such close social and religious forms. One must assume the action of several strong personalities who knew, with an almost superhuman instinct, how to sift out from the jumble of beliefs brought by the rebel slaves what was necessary to the life of the new society; but this new religion would not have taken root in forms so stable and so coherent if all had not been intimately conscious of being in agreement on a minimum of common concepts.

It is important to observe that the Refugee Blacks, who borrowed most of their techniques from the Indians and Europeans, remained rigorously faithful in their beliefs and rituals to the African substratum, from which they drew a homogeneous and [177] living whole. Although the beliefs of the Indians are known to them in their main lines, they have borrowed almost nothing from them; on the other hand, it is certain that vague Christian recollections influenced the conception they have of the supreme god, Masa Gadu, and their moral and religious law. But they have been introduced into an African system of thought, and in fact the beliefs which directly influence individual and social life come in a straight line from the African earth.

792 [171] Metaphysical conceptions. Through the rituals of the Refugee Blacks appear /193/ metaphysical conceptions very comparable to those which have been noted in the populations of West Africa.

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The great gods Gwangwéla and Gédéosu of the Djuka are not known to the Boni.

Strictly speaking, no cult of Masa Gadu exists. No edifice is reserved for him, he has no priests, and no collective ceremonies are conducted on his behalf. He is nevertheless constantly present in the religious life of the Boni, associated with ancestor worship. Every ceremony of ancestor worship includes an invocation to Masa Gadu. From time to time, for specific motives such as the illness of a member of the lo, people go /195/ specially to the fraga tiki to invoke Masa Gadu. The oldest man of the lo officiates, while a younger one pours a little water and tafia at the foot of the fraga tiki; the elder addresses Masa Gadu in everyday language, in simple terms, in a familiar conversational tone, asking him for the cure of illnesses or the end of calamities. Those present, seated in a semicircle, punctuate the end of the speech with some rhythmical applause, uttering the ritual formula of thanks: "Gaã tãŋgi tãŋgi fi yu, Masa Gadu."

Outside of these ceremonies which hardly go beyond the framework of the lineage, everyone may address Masa Gadu directly by praying aloud, if, for example, he finds himself alone in the bush and prey to an illness. One never addresses Masa Gadu other than for a specific material purpose. Inner prayer for the purpose of spiritual perfection does not exist to our knowledge among the Refugee Blacks.

One applies directly to Masa Gadu when one believes oneself to be the victim of an iniquitous action (see curse). However, although the Refugee Blacks have a very lively sense of justice, they never call Masa Gadu to witness for the cruel and arbitrary vengeances (kunu) which the lower divinities are believed to exercise on them. It is taken for granted that all these divinities do conforms to the role which Masa Gadu has assigned to them and that the suffering they inflict on men is indispensable to the proper working of the universe.

/195 cont./

794 [181] The laws of Odun. The cult of Odun (Odū) is the keystone of the social and religious structure of the Refugee Blacks. It is a very secret cult; its rites are not practiced in the presence of outsiders and all curiosity about it meets with frank hostility. [123] The Boni, who talk rather freely about the cults of possession, are mute on the subject of Odun, and one may spend years among them without even hearing this name uttered.

794 ● 184 The worship of Odun is common to the Boni and the Saramaka (perhaps this is what explains the trustful relations which exist between the two groupings). Among the Djuka it is replaced by the worship of Gwangwéla (Grantata), which has exactly the same functions and rites.

796 Odun is not to be confused with the creator God Nana (Masa Gadu). The myths explaining the relationship of these two entities were not known by our informants, but it is clear that Odun was sent to men by Masa Gadu as legislator and judge.

671 Odun's laws have a profound originality, as much by their content as by the sanctions which accompany them. It is not excessive to speak of a religious and moral doctrine of the Refugee Blacks.

[641] These laws appear in negative form. A certain number of acts and behavior are forbidden to those who have entered the society of the Refugee Blacks by taking an oath which binds 784 them for good and all. Offenders will be punished without the direct intervention of men, by the all-powerful action of Odun, who will kill them or /196/ strike them down with sicknesses. As a general rule, Odun's punishment is death; this is what explains the fear his name inspires.

673 [754] Odun forbids:

--Sorcery, wisi, in the most general sense, that is, any magic action having as its purpose the killing, making ill, and in a general way doing harm to another person.

/206 cont./

The Kumẽnti. These gods are common to the Saramaka (Kromenti) (1), Djuka, and Boni. The Kumẽnti are considered to be benevolent gods and friends of men, so their possession is very much desired. They do not come into men spontaneously, they are obtained only by applying to a teacher. In principle only men can obtain Kumẽnti, while on the other hand only women can have Bũnzunki /sic/.

1. There is no doubt about the origin of this word; it is a deformation of Coromantin, name given in the 18th century to Ashanti country. The "Coromantin Negroes," reputed to be particularly intractable, played a large role in the slave revolts. The Kumenti cult of possession must originally have been a cult peculiar to the Coromantin nation.

The Kumẽnti are specialized in protection against fire and against machete and gun wounds. These dangers hold the largest place among the anxieties of the Refugee Blacks, who spend almost all their life in the bush and with whom nearly all sores become infected and have serious consequences. Thus the Kumẽnti cult holds an important place in their magic; even someone who is not possessed will try to obtain from these gods an ɔbia that will protect him from these various dangers.

The instruction of the disciples of these gods takes as its pattern the procedures described above, but the collective dances appear to play an essential part. The teacher calls on the gods by beating a special rhythm on ordinary drums (apinti) and by uttering invocations punctuated by the rattle of the saka (Indian maraka, that is, hollow calabash provided with a handle and containing seeds).

/214 cont./

787 their legs with this white clay; they prophesy in a singing tone, without the usual voice of their bearer's ceasing to be recognizable, expressing themselves in the Saramaka language.

796 The Ampuku have the appearance of men similar to Blacks, but unknown. They reside in the depths of the woods; some are good, others bad. One can gain their good will by [84] worshiping them, which is especially developed in Saramaka country.

796 Baliki, of Kormotibo village, tells of having been present 535 one day at a dance of the Ampuku, when he was traveling to [103] the Saramaka village of Balen.

"During the day, people went on the paths far into the bush to put down calabashes containing certain herbs. At night were seen to come out of the forest a large number of unknown men, dressed in the manner of the Saramaka. They danced all night, and at dawn left again as they had come."

796 The Ampuku gods, considered to be maleficent gods of [789] the bush, exercise their influence on everyone. When a person [824] has slept in the bush, he "washes" himself free of Ampuku with an infusion of leaves of five plants which are part of the secondary flora surrounding the villages and of which the principal plant is the sangaafu (Costus cylindricus).

791 Frequency of possession. In 1956 teachers or bas were very 787 scarce in Boni country. For the Kumenti gods, only S... (Kotika) remained; for the Papa gadu, since the death of Antinon (Dju), there remained only M... (Papaïston) and B... [619] (Asisi). People were commonly going to receive instruction from Djuka teachers in the villages of the Tapanaoni.

787 It would be a great error to believe that nearly all the 562 men have gods. On the contrary, this is an exception. According to the evaluations we were able to make, there is not more than one adult man out of six or seven who is possessed.

787 /216 cont./
824

Aluku Name	Identification	Use
Sãŋgaafu	Costus cylindricus (zingiberaceae)	cult of the Papa gadu and of the Ampuku
Malimbelimbe	Piper sp. (?)	——
Filli (Hɔligɔɔ)	Chamaesyae sp. (?) (euphorbiaceae)	——

828 Beliefs Concerning the Human Person and Its Development
Ancestor Worship

[171] The Refugee Blacks of the various tribes have precise and identical conceptions on this subject, which are found also, more or less mixed with Christian conceptions, among the West Indian populations of African origin. For them, man is formed of three elements: the body, the yɔrka which may be translated by personality, and a higher principle called akka.

[184] It goes without saying that among the Boni, who have not elaborated these conceptions and received them from the Djuka,
[128] nobody is capable of discoursing on them. But numerous conceptions having to do with magic and to the relationships with the ancestors permit of rather reliable cross-checking.

774 The akka. It is not possible to translate akka (1) by soul in the

1. This word appears to be a deformation of kla (Agni-Baoulé), word to which a very comparable meaning is attached.

sense we understand it. The akka is an immortal divine element

/217 cont./

If someone marries a girl, he must not only pay her mother the price of virginity but must also pay the girl's akka. For that he offers white beads and cloth which the bride will wear, as well as sweets which will be consumed by her. If the price of virginity were not paid, the woman's akka, humiliated, might make her sick or kill her.

/218/ There are seven categories of akka, masculine and feminine, one for each day of the week.

Crevaux in 1877 was able to establish the complete list (1):

1. This conception is widespread in the Agni-Ashanti culture area, among the Ewé and Mina, and as far as western Dahomey. The names reported among the Mina correspond very exactly, except for some differences in pronunciation, to the ones kept by the Boni.

	Men	Women
Sunday	Kwasi	Kwasiba
Monday	Kɔdyo	Adyuba
Tuesday	Kwami	Abeniba
Wednesday	Kwaku	Akuba
Thursday	Yao	Yaba
Friday	Kɔfi	Afiba
Saturday	Kwamina	Amba

All these names are known to the Boni, but none of our informants was capable of reciting the complete list. It is well understood that a name like Kɔfi, Kɔdio /sic/, etc. is the akka's name and not at all the man's name (2).

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2. Although it happens that people receive as a name an akka name, sometimes accompanied by a qualificative, such as Lébikwaku.

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[551] Actually, each one knows his akka's name, which was revealed to him by his parents when he was a child; to this name is attached an akka kina or food prohibition relative to the akka.

[754] Both are carefully kept secret even from near relatives and friends, for knowing them could help the wisimã take possession of the akka. On this subject people often use the term gadu kina, as they say mi gadu instead of mi akka. This term is

[784] easily confused with the prohibition imposed on the possessed

[787] person by the god which incarnates itself in him; these are two very different notions.

[858] The akka kina is unique for each man. It is sought by

[787] the parents when the child is completely weaned. They try to draw parallels between the foods he has eaten and the health disorders he may exhibit, and these suppositions are confirmed by divinatory procedures.

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782 A man does not ordinarily pray to his akka. He addresses prayer to it only if he is sick, to ask it for protection, or before leaving on a long trip, to ask it to watch over him. If he comes back safe and sound, he thanks it by making an offering to it, in the form of a bottle of syrup (switi sopi), which he turns upside down over his head.

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184 According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, the Djuka have the idea that the shadow (kaaka) is the visible image of the akka; the Boni do not appear to have this conception; one does not observe that they attach any importance whatever to whether a man's shadow passes over them; on the contrary, one must not step over a man lying on the ground, that might injure his akka.

/221 cont./

775 828 [184] "My nɛ̃mseki is So-and-So." Mr. W. F. van Lier, speaking of the Djuka who have much clearer conceptions on religious questions, gives an important clarification: in 1915 Grand Man Oséisi became incarnate in a newborn baby of the tribe, nevertheless he continues to be invoked as an ancestor before the fraga tiki. It seems, then, that it is a case of certain elements of the personality which are believed to be reincarnated, and not of the yɔrka as a whole.

787 It is important to distinguish the nɛ̃mseki from possession by a yɔrka. Possession by a yɔrka is an exceptional occurrence which is manifested in the form of trances, the yɔrka speaking through the mouth of its bearer; outside of these possessions, this yɔrka is believed to reside in the abode of the ancestors.

[613] A yɔrka can reveal itself thus only in a person of its matrilineage.

775 828 The nɛ̃mseki, on the contrary, exists in all men. The ancestor who is thus partially reincarnated is generally on the paternal side, but this is not an absolute rule.

A man is not conscious of his nɛ̃mseki and is acquainted with it only because his parents have revealed it to him. This nɛ̃mseki does not manifest itself in anything in everyday life; it does not impose any kina whatever and does not ask for offerings. However, when a young child falls ill, divination may reveal that it is the doing of the nɛ̃mseki which is indignant at being misunderstood. People hurry then, always with the help of divination, to find out the name of the nɛ̃mseki, proceeding by elimination. As a general rule, they allow themselves to be guided by resemblances of physiognomy, birthmarks calling to mind, for example, certain scars of the dead ancestor.

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It is believed that the older a man is when he dies, the more time he will allow to elapse before being reincarnated.

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751 789 Renewal of the power of the ɔbia. The Refugee Blacks have the idea that no magic power can last if it is not renewed by formulas and offerings appealing to the god from which it came. [824] Each year, at variable dates for each ɔbia, one must renew the power of the ɔbia by dipping the support object into a maceration of certain leaves. This renewal may not take place on January 1. On that day all leaves lose their power. /252/

[768] Mr. W. F. van Lier writes that among the Djuka, objects (bracelets, etc.) serving as support for a magic remedy are thrown away upon the death of the owner for they have lost [184] [428] all power. The Boni do not have this conception; with them, these objects keep their value for the dead person's son provided that before dying he voluntarily transmitted them to him by giving him mula.

789 428 613 Transmission of ɔbia. An ɔbia is often bequeathed simultaneously to a son and to a nephew. Care is taken not to lose the ɔbia for the lineage. Thus it is that certain lineages have certain ɔbia as their specialty.

789 [171] Kãndu. The Refugee Blacks call kãndu a magic object intended to protect property (houses, harvests) against theft. This procedure is also very much used by the Creoles.

There are three common kinds of kãndu:

--Piiti tiki kãndu. It is made of a split stick stuck into the ground, in the slit of which dry banana leaves or small sticks are placed horizontally. This device originated in Dahomey.

--Sikopu kãndu. It involves a shovel stuck into the ground in front of the house (the idea of the shovel is associated with the idea of death, for this instrument is used particularly in digging graves).

--Bɔɔ kãndu, made up of a bow and arrow planted in the ground.

/254 cont./

841 Woman's magic power. The Refugee Blacks assume that a woman, during her menstrual periods, is impure and has the power to destroy the power of ɔbia. So during these periods she must withdraw into a special hut, munu ɔsu, and prepare her meals in special dishes; she may not prepare her husband's food, for by doing this she would destroy the power of his ɔbia, and must abstain from touching objects he habitually uses, particularly his gun, which would lose its good points for shooting. Even in the little farming habitations which consist of only several huts, one may be sure that one of them serves as a munu ɔsu.

841 343 462 [465] The munu ɔsu are very simple sheds built by the women themselves, using reclaimed materials taken from huts being demolished; some belong to one woman only; for others, three or four women get together. They have recourse to men only for assembling the framework, remunerating them with several cans of couac or several baskets of yams.

841 /255/ A man who has a powerful ɔbia like the man nɛ̃ŋge ɔbia must abstain from speaking to a woman who has her menses.

[751] The Boni assume there are women wicked enough to willfully hide their menses in order to destroy the power of a man's ɔbia, but he who has a good man nɛ̃ŋge ɔbia cannot be a dupe: the iron circle warns him of the danger by squeezing his arm.

184 841 68 According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, the act of willfully hiding her menses is for the Djuka one of the gravest offenses a woman can commit, and the most severe punishments are inflicted on her. It is not the same with the Boni: in such a case a woman risks only being insulted and banned.

752 834 171 Another deeply rooted belief among the Refugee Blacks, and which exists with many Creoles, is the necessity for the

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796 769 539 happen to him, may it pass to one side. Thus we have come to pour (the water) to beg you to protect the village. The year has changed today, it is a new year. May we have money and food, we beg of you, ancestors; watch over our plantings, may they prosper, may the young women who fish at the wharf catch fish."

"All the captains pour (the water), the fiskal, the majors pour (3) for all the lineages; protect the villages."

• [184] [622]

3. Honorific titles imitated from the Djuka but which, among the Boni, do not really mean anything; the head of Kormotibo village bears the title fiskal and the one of Kotika village the title major.

Fintiman:

"The people who have pure hearts, protect them, big and small. But the people whose hearts are not good, who do evil spells to kill others and decrease the village, we do not pray for them; turn them out."

"Watch over the grand man; if something happens to him, it must not be said that we, the people who are seated there, have not prayed well. Great ancestors, we supplicate you, if we were on the point of meeting misfortune, that we may find the good."

(They begin to pour the aafia.)

/265/ "Grand Man Awensay ...." (Thanks follow for a trip which was carried out without hindrance.)

Lébiman:

"May the grand man live long with us, may misfortune not happen to him."

/296 cont./

648 So relations between the Europeans and Refugee Blacks have nothing in common with what one observes in Africa: one notes their faults without indulgence, but one admires them for their strong personality, their art, and their techniques, and one bears an esteem for them which is not feigned.

829 The Refugee Blacks feel neither hate nor jealousy toward Europeans. This /297/ may surprise one at first, for they have had to put up with cruel wars fought against them, which have left a precise memory with them; but the explanation is simple: the Boni have no hate because their life is happy, and they have no jealousy because they do not try to imitate the Europeans and are satisfied with their own civilization.

173 186 On this subject it will be noted that the Refugee Blacks recall the time of slavery without shame and without any inferiority complex; this is simply because they do not have the feeling of being the descendants of slaves; they feel themselves to be the descendants of warriors who imposed their independence by force of arms; the Djuka, exaggerating to themselves the scope of the successes won by their ancestors, even have a certain superiority complex. Proud of their ancestors, the Refugee Blacks do not feel in any way inferior to the white man and behave toward him as equal to equal.

648 [184] The Boni, like the Djuka and the Saramaka in Surinam, live under a de facto regime which is equivalent to internal autonomy. This regime was instituted for the Boni from their first contact with the French administration in 1861; it has always been associated with perfect loyalty.

The French administration, which until recent times did not have any permanent establishments in the interior of the country, has never tried to interfere with the interior functioning of the tribes which went on and still goes on according to their own law. The Refugee Blacks have thus been spared that hybrid jurisdiction, applying a customary law altered by European ideas,

/298 cont./

114 Here desirous of remaining on the plane of strict scientific objectivity, we shall avoid entering the discussion of the benefit springing from this action, which, moreover, would necessitate a long development. We shall limit ourselves to showing that it appears to us to be doomed to failure.

871 --The experiment of schooling has been made for more
177 than 30 years among the Boni in the village of Kotika. Half a dozen children, doing well in their studies, left for Surinam and broke with their native group. In the others, the teaching received left only faint traces. As a matter of fact, there is no room in a normal intelligence to receive at the same time the mass of technical knowledge necessary for holding one's own in the society of the Refugee Blacks and ordinary school in-
[829] struction. One necessarily drives out the other; now the Boni are extremely fond of their free life on the great river, which assures them very satisfactory material conditions of living.

797 --Evangelization has been carried on with perseverance
177 for more than 200 years with the Refugee Blacks of Surinam. It has not given appreciable results. It has been the same in
● /194 French Guiana with the action carried on with the Saramaka working /299/ near the communes of the coast (1), and more

[648] 1. The Saramaka not only have no tendency to be converted, but they exert a significant influence on the population of the communes. On
[756] the Oyapok the Saramaka healer
[787] has numerous clients, and in spite of the clergy's interdiction, many women go to the possession dances of the Papa gudu serpent gods.

recently with the Boni of the Upper Maroni.